

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending in the present application. In the Office Action, claims 1-6, 12-16, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the Alert Standard Format (ASF) specification. Claims 7-10, 17, and 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the ASF specification in view of alleged industry standard computer architectural features as evidenced by Hobson (U.S. Patent No. 6,360,327). Claims 11 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the ASF specification in view of alleged industry standard microcontroller usage as evidenced by Schwarz (U.S. Patent No. 4,910,732). Claims 22-23 and 26-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the ASF specification in view of alleged industry standard architectural practices as evidenced by Trieu (5,925,135) and Cromer (U.S. Patent No. 6,282,642). Claims 25 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the ASF standard in view of Cromer.

As discussed in the background section of the specification, the ASF specification defines one approach to "system manageability" using a remote management server 90. The ASF Specification defines remote control and alerting interfaces capable of operating when an operating system of a client system, such as the computer system 100, is not functioning. See Patent Application, page 4, ll. 20-25 and Figures 1A-C. For example, an alert-sending device, acting as an SMBus master, may periodically poll a legacy sensor device. See ASF specification, page 63.

However, the ASF specification does not describe or suggest an indicator configured to indicate a master mode for the Alert Standard Format management engine when an interface card is coupled to the first external bus or a slave mode for the Alert Standard Format management

engine when the interface card is absent from the first external bus, as set forth in independent claims 1, 13, and 16. The ASF specification also fails to teach or suggest operating an Alert Standard Format south bridge in a slave mode in response to detecting the Alert Standard Format network interface card presence in the client computer system positively and operating the Alert Standard Format south bridge in a master mode in response to detecting the Alert Standard Format network interface card presence in the client computer system negatively, as set forth in independent claims 22 and 26.

The Examiner admits that the ASF specification does not describe or suggest selecting master and/or slave modes based upon the presence and/or absence of an interface card. See Office Action, page 6. However, the Examiner alleges that this is an inherent feature of the SMBus as evidenced by Trieu. Applicants respectfully disagree and note that inherency requires that the asserted proposition *necessarily* flow from the disclosure. It is not enough that a reference could have, should have, or would have been used as in the claimed invention. Trieu describes a bus that may be coupled to one or more devices, which may have master and/or slave capabilities. See Trieu, col. 1, line 65 – col. 2, line 9. However, Trieu is completely silent with regard to any techniques for selecting the master and/or slave modes of the devices. Accordingly, Trieu is completely silent with regard to selecting master and/or slave modes based upon the presence and/or absence of an interface card.

The Examiner relies upon Hobson to describe a bus in a system with a bridge, Schwarz to describe an 8051 controller, and Cromer to describe a computer architecture including a south bridge. However, none of these secondary references remedies the fundamental deficiencies of the ASF specification and/or Trieu. In particular, the secondary references do not describe or suggest an indicator configured to indicate a master mode for the Alert Standard Format

management engine when an interface card is coupled to the first external bus or a slave mode for the Alert Standard Format management engine when the interface card is absent from the first external bus, as set forth in independent claims 1, 13, and 16. The secondary references also fail to teach or suggest operating an Alert Standard Format south bridge in a slave mode in response to detecting the Alert Standard Format network interface card presence in the client computer system positively and operating the Alert Standard Format south bridge in a master mode in response to detecting the Alert Standard Format network interface card presence in the client computer system negatively, as set forth in independent claims 22 and 26.

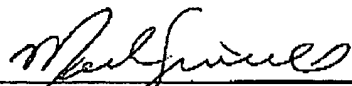
For at least the aforementioned reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has failed to make a *prima facie* case that the present invention is obvious over the prior art of record. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner's rejections of claims 1-23, 25-27, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 24 and 28 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Examiner indicated that these claims contained allowable subject matter. In view of the above discussion, Applicant respectfully submits that the respective independent claims for claims 24 and 28 are allowable and, on this basis, requests that the Examiner's objections be withdrawn.

For the aforementioned reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all claims pending in the present application are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned agent at (713) 934-4052 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

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